

Remarks

Reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested, particularly as herein amended.

Before turning to the merits of the Office Action of January 4, 2007, an "Information Disclosure Statement" was filed in this matter on July 7, 2006, together with the Reply which is acknowledged on the Office Action Summary page. However, the consideration of this Information Disclosure Statement has not been acknowledged, and an initialed copy of the single PTO-1449 form submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement has not been returned. Due consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement, and the return of an initialed copy of the supplied PTO-1449 form, is respectfully requested.

Turning next to the merits of the Office Action of January 4, 2007, claims 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, and a corresponding objection to the drawings is made later in the Office Action, under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a). There is also an objection to the drawings, under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a), relative to claim 17. However, claims 17, 19 and 20 have presently been canceled from this application, leaving such issues moot.

Identified claims are additionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated, in the alternative, by U.S. Patent No. 6,379,371 (Novak et al.) and U.S. Patent Application

Publication No. 2004/0241608 (Hickok). Claims 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over a proposed combination of Hickok (2004/0241608) and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0023187 (Hickok). Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over a proposed combination of Hickok (2004/0241608) and U.S. Patent No. 5,419,703 (Warrin et al.).

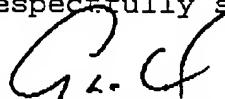
It is further indicated, however, that claim 23 would be allowable if suitably rewritten.

In reply, independent claim 12 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of dependent claim 23, including the subject matter of intervening claims 21 and 22, and claims 21 to 23 have been canceled. Conforming amendments have been made to dependent claims 18 and 24, and a new dependent claim 28 has been added to claim subject matter which is shown in Fig. 1 of the drawings and which is described at lines 14 to 17 of page 6 and lines 11 to 14 of page 8 of the substitute specification submitted with the Reply filed on July 7, 2006 (corresponding to lines 7 to 11 of page 5 and lines 24 to 28 of page 6 of the original specification).

It is submitted that this operates to place pending claims 12 to 16, 18 and 24 to 28 in condition for allowance. In the event that any additional issues are identified which may require further consideration, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned to discuss and resolve such issues.

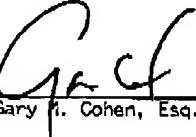
Corresponding action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,


GARY M. COHEN, ESQ.
Reg. No. 28,834
Attorney for Applicants
Tel.: (610) 975-4430

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being
facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent
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Gary M. Cohen, Esq.